

treatment and rewarding contributions of equal opportunity, provides a balance that creates trust and integrity between the leaders of the NAACP and the Department of Defense. The working partnership of the NAACP and the Department of Defense ensures that the flame of freedom for all people regardless of color continues to burn.

It is a privilege to recognize the efforts of an organization whose mission is to ensure that people of color are afforded equal access to opportunity. I would ask that you and all of my distinguished colleagues join me in the celebration of this 28th Anniversary of the NAACP Annual Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Military Awards Dinner.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TODD
KIMZEY

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Todd Kimzey of Loma Elementary School.

Todd is the Grand Champion of the grades 4/5 Greater San Diego 24 Challenge® Math Program. I want to applaud him for his success.

The 24 Challenge® Math Program is an activity which helps young students learn how to add, subtract, multiply and divide. It has been used in more than one-hundred-thousand classrooms around the world to teach basic mathematics. Becoming the grand champion of such a competition is quite an accomplishment.

During the 2000–2001 school year, more than 640 elementary and middle school classrooms throughout San Diego County received 24® game materials to be used with second-through eighth-grade students. A U.S. Department of Education grant provided for 24 Game Mathematics Club kits to be sent to participating classrooms in San Diego County. The fruits of this small but worthy contribution can be seen in Todd's triumph.

I enjoyed meeting this young man and other competitors at this local program within my district. It is truly a pleasure to meet these bright students and their families.

HONORING JULIE M. AUSTIN, EX-
ECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FOOTHILL
TRANSIT

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special recognition to Ms. Julie M. Austin. On July 30, 2003, the Foothill Transit Executive Board will wish a fond farewell to Ms. Austin, who is leaving her position as Executive Director of Foothill Transit and Vice President of Transit Management for ATC/Forsythe & Associates, Inc., a post she has held since 1997.

As Executive Director, Ms. Austin has over-all responsibility for implementing Executive Board policies, developing policy rec-

ommendations and providing leadership and vision for the nationally recognized Foothill Transit. Foothill Transit was created in 1988, in one of the largest public-private transit partnerships in the United States, and has delivered cost-effective, safe and efficient bus service to commuters and residents in the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys, located in the eastern portion of Los Angeles County in southern California. Foothill Transit now operates on 32 routes with nearly 300 buses and almost 17 million annual boardings, a marked increase from the 9.5 million boardings at the time of the creation of the transit agency.

The American Public Transportation Association recognized Foothill Transit in 2001 with a "Bus Safety Gold Award," dubbing Foothill the safest transit agency of its size. Foothill was also named "Outstanding Transit System" of its size by APTA in 1993 and 1995. The National Safety Council, Greater Los Angeles Chapter, recognized Foothill Transit in 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 and 2001 with first-place awards for its safety programs.

Ms. Austin played a leadership role in the accomplishments of Foothill Transit, both as Executive Director and as Deputy Executive Director from 1995 to 1997. She also contributed to the success of public transit in Los Angeles County as Director of Management Support from 1993 to 1995 at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and as Senior Transit Analyst/Manager of Transportation Policy from 1989 to 1993 at the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, where she oversaw a three-year evaluation of the Foothill Transit Zone. She also worked for the Southern California Association of Governments for three years and spent several years as a transportation consultant.

A resident of the City of Monrovia, California, Ms. Austin has a bachelor's degree in journalism from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. She is active in the American Public Transit Association (Legislative Committee), California Transit Association (Executive Committee), San Gabriel Valley Commerce and Cities Consortium Board, Women's Transportation Seminar, San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Transit Committee, and West Covina Chamber of Commerce.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring this truly remarkable leader in the field of public transit in our region, in thanking for her efforts and in wishing her the best in her future endeavors.

EXTEND THE HMONG VETERANS'
NATURALIZATION ACT

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that would allow more Hmong refugees who served in conjunction with American soldiers during the Vietnam War to apply for citizenship with special consideration of their service to our country.

Between 1961 and 1975 Hmong soldiers gathered intelligence, conducted reconnaissance, and undertook other dangerous missions in support of American troops. Tens of thousands of Hmong died during the war and

over 100,000 were forced to flee to refugee camps.

In 2000, under the leadership of the late Rep. Bruce Vento, Congress approved the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act, which provided an exemption from the English language requirement and special consideration on the civics test for those Hmong veterans and their spouses. Later that year, similar legislation was enacted granting the same benefits to widows of Hmong veterans.

Approximately 5,000 Hmong currently living in America took advantage of the Hmong Veteran's Naturalization Act and proudly became citizens. However, many veterans and their spouses missed the May 26, 2003 deadline and are now unable to apply for citizenship with the eased requirements. My legislation would extend that deadline by an additional 18 months in order to give every deserving veteran or surviving widow a chance to apply for citizenship.

Remembering the sacrifices that these brave men and women made while rescuing downed American pilots, serving in guerilla units, and in other operations in support of U.S. troops, we owe it to them to provide every opportunity to become American citizens.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation.

HGTV

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud that Home and Garden Television (HGTV), one of the Nation's fastest growing networks, is headquartered in my hometown, Knoxville, Tennessee.

HGTV is a really outstanding cable channel with a wide variety of programs.

Unlike some of the trash that is shown on other networks, the programs on HGTV are positive and helpful and encourage people to improve their lives and their communities.

Joshua Green, Editor of the Washington Monthly, has written a humorous but very complimentary article about HGTV in the July/August issue of his magazine.

I would like to call this article to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.

[From the Washington Monthly]

HOME SICK; THE ADDICTIVE ALLURE OF HOME
AND GARDEN TELEVISION

(By Joshua Green)

Over the past two years, as the rest of the economy has gradually tanked, one sector has stubbornly resisted: the housing market. Despite layoffs, the weak dollar, the moribund stock market, and all other manner of economic calamity, house prices are climbing faster than George W. Bush's negative rating in Iraq. In fact, economists credit the housing market's continuing strength with keeping the country out of recession. Much like the "wealth effect" created by the late '90s stock boom, rising real-estate prices have made Americans feel rich enough to keep on spending amply, regardless of the overall economic climate. So the booming housing market is surely welcome news to most Americans—except those, like me, who

would like to actually buy a house and are extraordinarily piqued about this. If there were a Murphy's Law of Economic Collapse, it would hold that as jobs disappear and wages plummet, the price of your dream house will skyrocket.

Most economists attribute this phenomenon to historically low interest rates, which translate into extremely affordable mortgages. I have a different theory. I blame HGTV—the Home and Garden Television channel—one of the fastest-growing stations on cable and a certifiable cult phenomenon among many of my peers.

For the uninitiated, HGTV is one of those niche cable stations we all heard so much about back in the early '90s that sounded preposterous at the time—who'd watch round-the-clock gardening, remodeling, and house-hunting tips?—but seems perfectly reasonable today alongside the dozens of specialty channels devoted to cooking, pets, sci-fi, soaps, books, and—on my cable system—one click below the NASA channel, which on weekends broadcasts continuous footage of the earth rotating. (Really.) Since its 1994 launch, HGTV has grown from a tiny startup to a cable colossus that reaches nearly 80 million households in the United States alone, broadcasts its programs to viewers as far away as Latvia and Brunei, and is even available to U.S. service personnel in 175 countries and on board Navy ships. The idea of rugged naval aviators, fresh from sorties over Iraq or Afghanistan, choosing to unwind before Home and Garden Television's design and decorating tips is testament to the strange power this channel holds over its viewers.

THE HOME-SHOPPING NETWORK

At first blush, HGTV is a benign—even an edifying—form of entertainment that's centered on a can-do ethos for the current or expectant homeowner. Instead of patrician decorating tips, HGTV shows like "Weekend Warriors" champion a Calvinist work ethic in which determined homeowners charge headlong into demanding-but-reasonably-priced projects that typically leave them spent, but never broke, and with a spectacular new veranda or stunning hardwood floors to show for their efforts. There are shows about improving your home's appearance ("Curb Appeal"), tending to your home's yard ("Landscapers' Challenge"), decorating your home cheaply ("Design on a Dime") or even more cheaply ("Designing Cents"), home-centric extreme-sports knockoffs ("Winter Gardener," "Extreme Homes") and others, like "Help Around the House," that extol the life-enhancing practicalities of previously mundane tasks like caulking or grout work.

Many HGTV shows feature a subtle, battle-of-the-sexes leitmotif that adds to the intrigue, while reinforcing and pandering to its audience's prejudices in a way that surely boosts viewership. On the popular "Designing for the Sexes," most men are of the hapless variety, puzzled as to why their wife is upset over the moose head they'd like to mount over the dining room table; most women display an alarming fondness for pink chenilles or French country style of doilies. Viewers therefore identify quickly, privately relieved to discover that their own situation isn't nearly as outlandish as they'd first imagined. They receive further encouragement from the show's denouement, which invariably features a designer or decorator of Christ-like patience who steps in to mollify the warring factions by curbing even the tackiest excesses and delivering a touch of class and taste that both can live with. This men-are-from-Mars-women-are-from-Venus format presents itself merely as decorating help. But the effect upon the added partici-

pants—and viewers, too—is not unlike that of a good marriage counselor, convincing couples that any problem can be overcome. I believe it is no coincidence that HGTV is the one channel my fiancée and I can agree on. It accomplishes a feat previously thought to be impossible, bridging the chasm between "Oprah" and "SportsCenter."

Like any 24-hour-a-day cable station, not all of HGTV's programming is what one would consider to be of Emmy Award-winning caliber. I could do without a show called "Simply Quilts." Certain others likewise seem best suited to the wee hours of the morning, such as "Flea Market Finds with the Kovels" (which could have been titled "Shopping for Junk with Old People") and "Subterraneans," a recent promo for which encouraged viewers to tune in and "meet unique people who make their home below the earth."

But one show—the station's flagship—renders these others mere trivialities. "House Hunters" is the source of my own HGTV addiction and, the latest Nielsen ratings suggest, many others' as well. It is HGTV's highest-rated show—and, I'm convinced, the clue to the network's appeal.

The show's premise is a simple one. In each episode, a friendly realtor helpfully accompanies a pair of prospective homebuyers as they shop for a house or condominium. Cameras follow them from room to room, allowing the viewer to examine the various properties in what amounts to a vicarious trial run for the potential homebuyer. The first time I tuned in, a young newlywed couple wanted to move out of their cramped apartment and buy their first home but clearly had no idea what they were doing. These circumstances were reassuringly similar to my own. I watched with growing appreciation as the realtor listened patiently to their needs and then drove them to one beautiful house after another. If a house was too small, the realtor would smile and show them a larger one. If a house lacked a pool, the realtor would find them one that also had a jacuzzi. If a house was on a noisy street, the realtor would show them one in an area so remote it probably had not yet been mapped. And every visit was a leisurely, pressure-free stroll that seemed not only easy, but fun.

The young couple soon found a perfect home, conferred briefly with the realtor, and decided to place a bid on it. "House Hunters" cut to commercial. Despite having known them for just 22 minutes or so, I was transfixed, and found myself rooting vigorously for their bid to be accepted. When the show returned, our prayers—theirs and mine—were answered. As the couple sat emotionlessly in their worn rental, the phone rang. It was their realtor, with good news! I was privately impressed that HGTV had a camera crew on hand to document this happy occasion. The show ended by flashing forward several months to show the couple in joyously possession of their new home. I stole a glance at my fiancée—who looked exactly as she had at the end of Titanic—and immediately began looking forward to my own home-buying experience.

NO CHASE LIKE HOME

It did not dawn on me until after I'd embarked on my own search for a house how wildly fictional this portrayal had been. But I quickly discovered that it was fundamentally dishonest on several levels and bore no resemblance at all to my own night-marish experience.

To begin with, "House Hunters" promotes the fantasy that charming, spacious, reasonably priced homes are plentiful and always available in even the most desirable neighborhoods. Perhaps this is true in some distant corner of North Dakota where sprawl

and gentrification have not yet driven up prices, but it is most certainly not the case in Washington, D.C., where I live, or in any surrounding suburb that I've been able to locate.

This shortage gives rise to another phenomenon that "House Hunters" does not acknowledge—the "open house." These are the overly brief weekend showings in which sellers open their homes to potential buyers—but which in today's hot real estate market quickly come to resemble cattle calls of anxious couples who strenuously avoid making eye contact with you as they rush around sizing up the house and potential competitors for it. Nor does "House Hunters" accurately depict the mood and temperament of these people, who tend to look wild-eyed and tormented and would probably arouse concern among security personnel if transported to any other setting. In the open houses I've experienced, the naifs who appear on "House Hunters" would be tramped and devoured like the herd weaklings in a pack of wildebeest on the Discovery Channel.

After awhile, once we had acclimated to these laws of the jungle, my fiancée and I found a cozy brick rowhouse that seemed perfect. As we elbowed past the other prospective buyers and walked from room to room, I felt that small shiver of excitement I had seemed to detect when couples on "House Hunters" had finally come upon the home they would buy. That evening we filled out a mountain of paper-work at our realtor's and submitted our bid. The next day I blew off work and sat expectantly by the phone about to be educated in yet another way in which "House Hunters" differs from reality. By this point I had become an avid fan of the show, but it had still never occurred to me that each episode's happy ending might not mirror reality. When my phone rang, I leapt for it. It was my realtor, who informed me that we had not gotten the house—that in fact 22 others had bid on it and driven the sale price more than \$100,000 above what originally had been asked.

Soon after, I became well acquainted with the concept of the escalation clause, the inspections waiver, the failed bid, and generally competing like gladiators for any property deemed livable and available. I also realized that "House Hunters" is totally staged—the couple always gets the house they want, and the show's producers are probably wise to steer clear of markets like Washington, D.C., which would terrify viewers anyway and kill their ratings. I angrily swore off HGTV and the cheap fantasy it peddled, and sheepishly sought out my copy of *Home Buying for Dummies*.

ROOTING FOR THE HOME-BUYING TEAM

Yet, strangely, life without HGTV did not improve—at least not for the six days that I held out against watching it. Houses remained overpriced, realtors unscrupulous, buyers frenzied, and I was no closer to escaping my one-bedroom. I found myself longing for familiar comforts. In the end, the siren call of reasonably priced homes and pressure-free bidding that always has a fairy-tale ending proved too powerful to resist. I cracked a beer and submitted to the evening's "House Hunters."

Only then did I truly understand the lure of HGTV—of what it is that grips me, and my addict-friends, and all those naval aviators overseas who are stressing about the availability of three-bedroom colonials in neighborhoods with decent schools. It's not the reality television that HGTV pretends to be, but an escape from our own real-estate reality into a soothing world where things are different and better; a place to retreat to after those greedy sellers pass on your bid, where one will always find sustenance and

encouragement; it's what excites people to keep marching out and buying new homes.

My story has a happy ending, though not the type you're likely to see on HGTV. Several weeks after our initial bid fell through (it seemed like years) our excellent realtor Vince—who, incidentally, could eat the realtors on "House Hunters" for breakfast—found us the perfect home and shrewdly snuck us in before the open house, pre-empting a bidding war by submitting a take-it-or-leave-it offer that cut out the competition. (I expect Vince will be surprised to learn he's been nominated for a Congressional Medal of Honor.)

Impending homeownership has brought with it complicated new challenges, so I've turned to my wellspring of wisdom for guidance. I now possess a master gardener's understanding of landscaping, and I'm confident that I can parry most of the feminine-looking accoutrements with which my fiancée seems intent upon decorating our new home. In fact, there's only one area where I've come up empty. I've searched in vain for a show called "Mortgage Hunters," but none seems to exist—perhaps there are aspects of home buying that even HGTV can't spin into fantasy.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Speaker, due to thunderstorms in Atlanta yesterday my plane was delayed and I missed the following votes: Roll call no. 354, roll call no. 355, roll call no. 356, and roll call no. 357. Had I been present I would have voted no on all of these votes.

FOREIGN COURT PRECEDENTS

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member agrees with the sentiments expressed in a July 11, 2003, Omaha World-Herald editorial entitled "Courting foreign ideas." In the recent Supreme Court decision overturning a Texas sodomy law (*Lawrence v. Texas*), the majority opinion written by Justice Anthony Kennedy cites a 1981 European Court of Human Rights decision as evidence that state sodomy laws are not founded in Western tradition.

Regardless of what one's position is on state sodomy laws, Supreme Court decisions should be (and, of course, generally are) based on the U.S. Constitution and U.S. legal precedent. This citation contributes to a damaging and dangerous precedent; this practice should end. While this Member is a long-time supporter of a strong transatlantic relationship, European or other foreign court actions, laws or traditions should not be cited in U.S. court cases.

This Member requests that the Omaha World-Herald editorial be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

[From the Omaha World-Herald, July 11, 2003]

COURTING FOREIGN IDEAS

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Lawrence vs. Texas* has stirred political con-

trovery, and not just for what it may or may not mean for gay marriage. Its reference to a European Court of Human Rights decision has spawned a furor over whether the justices will adopt foreign courts' views of individual liberties.

We welcomed the outcome of the case, which overturned a Texas sodomy law. But we're taken aback that a U.S. court, particularly the highest one, could so boldly open itself to foreign precedents.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, who wrote the majority opinion in the Texas case, cited the European courts 1981 decision as evidence that state sodomy laws are not founded in Western tradition.

Past U.S. laws and traditions are referenced heavily in many court decisions. American laws are certainly founded on the nation's Western heritage, especially that of the British legal system. But the U.S. Supreme Court is charged with upholding the U.S. Constitution and U.S. legal precedent.

In the 227 years of this nation's history, American laws and norms have developed apart from those of other nations, even those with similar concepts of liberty and rights. The death penalty and gun control are important issues on which U.S. and European laws, for instance, differ.

Are U.S. citizens now to be bound by other countries' laws and constitutions? Who will choose which countries' laws are fit and applicable and which are not? In his dissent to the Texas ruling, Justice Antonio Scalia, decried the foreign citation.

"Constitutional elements do not spring into existence . . . as the Court seems to believe, because foreign nations decriminalize conduct," Scalia wrote.

We agree. It's a course several justices seem inclined to pursue, unfortunately.

"Our Constitution and how it fits into the governing documents of other nations, I think, will be a challenge for the next generations," Justice Stephen Breyer said on a Sunday morning talk show.

Foreign laws and ideals that become broadly accepted by the U.S. populace certainly can be adopted into U.S. law—by their elected representatives, in Congress. That's a legislative function, not a judicial one. The guardians of our Constitution should know that and abide by it.

HONORING COLONEL LLOYD VERNON CAMP

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to posthumously recognize Colonel Lloyd Vernon Camp for his years of distinguished service to his country. Lloyd recently passed away on Saturday, July 12th.

Colonel Camp is best remembered for his service with the U.S. Army. Lloyd entered the army during World War II. He received the Distinguished Service Cross and was nominated for the Congressional Medal of Honor. He later served in the Korean conflict and then joined the California Army National Guard. In 1991, Lloyd acted as a Liaison Officer for the families of the soldiers in California's Central Valley while the soldiers were serving in Operation Desert Storm.

Colonel Camp received numerous awards and honors for his more than 45 years of service. He received the medal of the Order of St. Maurice from the National Infantry Association.

In 2002, Camp was inducted into the Officer Candidate Schools Hall of Fame where he was honored at a ceremony in Fort Benning, Georgia. Lloyd was a member of the Legion of Valor Museum in Fresno. A permanent plaque has been placed on a flag stand in front of the museum in his honor, and memorabilia from his career is currently on display.

Lloyd viewed life in this order: his love for God, his love for his family, and his love for his country. He is survived by his wife, Freida Camp, and his son, Rick Leetch.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Lloyd Vernon Camp for his valor and commitment. I invite my colleagues to join me in posthumously honoring Lloyd Camp for his extraordinary service and years of dedication to his country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote 322, the resolution to provide consideration of H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act, I was unavoidably detained due to an urgent family matter. If I had been present, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING THE TOWN OF CUMBERLAND GAP, TN

HON. ZACH WAMP

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the historic town of Cumberland Gap, TN as they celebrate their 200th anniversary of postal service.

Cumberland Gap has long been a place of historic passage. In pre-Colonial America, the Gap served Native Americans as a pivotal crossing for their trading and hunting routes through the Appalachian Mountains. Later, Daniel Boone and his 29 "axe men" blazed a 208 mile trail into central Kentucky providing a route for pioneer families to travel west. During the Civil War, Cumberland Gap gained military significance, becoming known as the "Gibraltar of America" and the "Keystone of the Confederacy."

Today however, in the age of flight, travelers through Cumberland Gap come not to get through the mountains, but to escape into them. The natural beauty of the surrounding area and the gap's rich cultural history make it a popular destination for travelers of all ages and interests. From hikers to historians, people continue to be drawn to the "gap between the mountains."

Time has almost stood still in the small Appalachian town of Cumberland Gap. As you walk through the quiet streets, you are greeted with architecture from the late 1800s and the 1920s. The streets are snap shots from the past, illustrating the progression of history even through today. The town's rich history, quiet charm, and natural beauty are especially appealing for cultural tourism.